

It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply to the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to Applicants and the duplicative examination by the Patent Office.

Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the invention in Group II (claims 15-20) would not be distinct from that in Group I since claim 15 defines a method of manufacturing the sliding member according to claim 1. Under MPEP 806.05 (f), it states:

A process of making a product made by the process can be shown to be distinct inventions if either or both of the following can be shown: (A) that the process *as claimed* is not an obvious process of making the product as the process *as claimed* can be used to make other and different products; or (B) that the product *as claimed* can be made by another and materially different process.

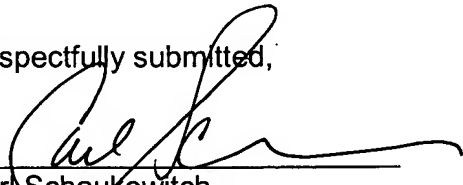
Claim 15, which depends from claim 1, recites a method of manufacturing the sliding member having only the features recited in claim 1. Therefore, the process, i.e., the method, can only be used to make the product claimed in claim 1 and the product as claimed in claim 1 can be made only by the process claimed in claim 15. It is respectfully submitted that, as claimed, the criteria set forth in MPEP 806.05 (f) cannot be met.

Additionally, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is generic to all embodiments of the claimed invention.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request rejoinder of all of the claims and species to the application. In the event the claims and species are not rejoined to the application, Applicants reserve the right to file a divisional application or divisional applications encompassing the non-elected claims and species.

Dated: December 8, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

By 
Carl Schaukowitch

Registration No.: 29,211
RADER, FISHMAN & GRAUER PLLC
1233 20th Street, N.W.
Suite 501
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 955-3750
Attorney for Applicant